

Seattle Human Rights Commission
Meeting Minutes
Thursday February 4th, 2015, 6:00–8:00 p.m.
City Hall - Boards and Commissions Room

Commissioners Present: Sarah Bishop, Jason Poydras, Amy Huang, Margaret Babayan, Danielle Wallace, Lara Diaconu,, Ken Nsimbi, Edlira Kuka, Marcel Baugh

Commissioners by Phone: None

Commissioners Absent: Onya Robertson, Julianna Tesfu, Ashley Miller

SOCR Staff Present: None

Welcome and Introductions

Call to Order: The meeting is called to order by Danielle Wallace

Public Comment: None

Approval of Minutes: Minutes for December and January approved with edits

- Motion to approve by Margaret Babayan; seconded by Sarah Bishop

SOCR Report Brenda not present for SOCR update

Finalizing Co-Chair Transition and Vote Margaret presents on new elections

- Commission voted to select Marcel Baugh as third Co-Chair

Executive Team Update:

- Mapping Our Community Connections: How can the commission align our work with community members? Co-chairs discussed ways to do strategic planning through creating a map of our networks, individual and human rights commission networks, to strengthen cross collaboration and hone in on community engagement strategies
- A spreadsheet will be created as a strategy to conduct future outreach and allies for the commission; start by brainstorming within each taskforce and thinking about issue areas that will be addressed to strengthen capacity.

- Commission feels this strategy will be useful
- Sarah suggests having an exit interview for each Commissioner so that we can utilize survey to improve Commission work and also as an ASK to keep past Commissioners within this network.
- Lara and Danielle will share tools of how to create this asset, network mapping

Fair Housing Meeting Update:

- Marcel provides update on barriers in King County for people to rent homes; re-entry is a stigma for many landlords who fear for safety
- Reinforced that people who are trying to find housing isn't always people that have come straight from jail or prison;
- Commissioner wanted to highlight public safety concerns
- Comparing rent increase
- Impact on gentrification on why fair housing is such a critical issue
- Asking for more stakeholders to be part of the fair housing movement
- Discussion of metrics of the spectrum of re-entry
- Overview: Campaign through Columbia Legal Services to provide equitable fair housing for people who have criminal backgrounds; Mayor formed a taskforce this year to reduce barriers to getting housing;
- Burden is not necessarily on the landlord but more so for the person trying to secure housing; Mayor wants to make the process more equitable.
- Public safety burden dialogue; how to increase transitional housing and design case plans to increase stabilization;
- This situation is more about supporting people who have incarcerated 5 to ten years ago and still having difficult time finding housing

Danielle Update on meeting with Councilmember:

- Civil and Political Rights Taskforce set up to schedule a meeting with new council members to discuss 2015 accomplishments and sharing 2016 work plan
- Asking a member from every taskforce to attend these meetings
- David Mendoza has agreed to meet in the evenings

New Commissioner Recruitment/Interview Committee

- Edlira shares update on interview process
- Yasmin Christopher has agreed to join the commission after being accepted last year—she will be joining Commission in April. Yasmin is an attorney---which is a desired qualification for this round of openings.
- Received many highly qualified candidates' applications. Interview committee will make final decision within next couple weeks.
- Interview Committee will make definite decision by March meeting.
- Mayoral appointments can take longer due to internal processes

Appeals and Hearings Update

Jason, Appeals Chair, gives updates on this month's hearings and appeals

- One appeal in January- Marcel and Onya agreed to attend the panel
- Affirmed SOCR decision
- Next appeal is on February 22nd, 2016 at 1:00pm
 - o On standby:
 - Lara Diaconu
 - Edlira Kuka
- Hearing on Monday, March 7th and Wednesday, March 23rd- Two commissioners needed
 - o All parties will be involved at these hearings
 - o Requesting for Commissions to attend- a very meaningful proceeding and a chance for Commissioners to make an impact

Finalizing work plan and vote

- Commissioners reviewed 2016 work plan:
 - o Discussion on making Appeals Committee as a standalone Committee instead of underneath a Taskforce
 - o Fish Consumption work will be under ECOSOC with Margaret and Lara
 - o Commissioners able to look at overall plan and share insights and personal networks to strengthen work plan
 - o Change Bringing Human Rights Taskforce name to Cultural, Immigrant, Refugee and Tribal Rights Task Force
- Motioned by Edlira Kuka to accept work plan with edits and seconded by Lara Diaconu

Task Force Updates/Action Items

- Propose Written Updates
 - o Co Chair discussed ways to streamline work updates
 - o Proposing task force to submit weekly update to plan monthly meeting and agenda accordingly; executive team will summarize all updates and send to Commissioners via email and written form during monthly meeting; Executive team will send reminders to send updates
 - o This will create time for more action items during monthly meetings
- Economic and Social Rights
 - o State of Emergency on Homelessness
 - Commissioners concerned with sweeps and removals of unauthorized encampments; Commissioners met with Catherine Lester, Director of Human Services Department on concern.
 - Commission will continue to follow up with process; a hearing will occur on February 10th led by Sally Bagshaw
 - o One Night Count: 4,500 people counted sleeping outside throughout King County; a 19% increase from previous year.
- Cultural, Immigrant, Refugee and Tribal
 - o Occupation Free Seattle has outreached to the Taskforce and is scheduling for them to speak on their work during
 - o ICE Raids currently on the taskforce radar
 - o Doing more community outreach to inform work-plan process

- Civil and Political Rights
 - o Continue with DOJ Monitoring
 - o Onya will attend upcoming CPC meetings and be more engaged with the community regarding this issue; will provide updates on action item
 - o Police Reform:
 - First quarter foundation work- getting engaged into the community
 - Second quarter- more action items
 - o New Youth Jail: Not able to sign on as an Appellant as a Commission; we can however, support the issue through a resolution
 - Continue to discuss on other strategic ways the commission can support

Task Force Work Time/

CRUEDA Comments:

- A committee that used to be led by Bruce Harrell but now has changed its name with a new council member leading
- New Council Member, Lisa Herbold, sent work plan and requested Commissioners to review and give feedback.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00p

Next Commission Meeting: Thursday, March 3rd, 2016, 6:00-8:00pm, Boards and Commissions Conference Room L-280. Next 5-Commission meeting is February 10, 2016 at 5:30p, Seattle Office for Civil Rights, 810 Third Avenue, Suite 750.